



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 2238

Resolution urging the United States Congress to pass the Caregiver Assistance and Resource Enhancement Act, to provide certain caregivers of veterans with training, support, and medical services.

By Council Members Nelson, Barron, Brewer, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, Gerson, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Mark-Viverito, Seabrook, Vacca and Weprin

Whereas, According to Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), it is estimated that approximately 1.4 million American troops have served in Iraq or Afghanistan at one time or another; and

Whereas, According to the Department of Defense (DoD), as of October 1, 2009, there have been almost 34,000 troops physically wounded in action in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas, In addition, the RAND corporation has estimated that as of last year, nearly 20% of returning veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan (about 300,000 total) reported mental symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; and

Whereas, The American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP) predicts that there will be 1.2 million veterans over 85 years old by 2010, and that there is a great danger that the coming swell in the number of elderly veterans will overwhelm existing services; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the federal agency charged with overseeing services for veterans, and the Disabled American Veterans (DAVA), an agency offering special services for those veterans who have handicaps or disabilities, will both likely experience a greater straining of resources for inpatient care as the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan proceed; and

Whereas, The President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors found that

21 percent of active duty servicemembers, 15 percent of the reserve, and 24 percent of retired or separated servicemembers had friends or family who gave up a job to be a caregiver; and

Whereas, H.R. 3155, the “Caregiver Assistance and Resource Enhancement Act”, was introduced in the United States Congress by Representative Michael Michaud in July 2009, to give support to those providing non-institutionalized extended care to disabled veterans, both family and non-family; and

Whereas, H.R. 3155 would provide caregivers with educational sessions teaching caring techniques and skills, and offer them respite care, nursing care, counseling and mental health services, medical care, lodging and subsistence; and

Whereas, Caregivers’ needs would be addressed in H.R. 3155 by expanding eligibility for the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA (CHAMPVA) to primary family caregivers of eligible veterans who are without health insurance and not eligible for any other public health insurance; and

Whereas, To facilitate this, H.R. 3155 would provide a monthly stipend to primary family caregivers of eligible veterans; and

Whereas, H.R. 3155 would also require that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to survey and report to specified congressional committees on issues relating to such caregivers; and

Whereas, By focusing on the needs of caregivers, such legislation would help ensure essential and valuable support for our nation’s veterans; and

Whereas, According to the VA, there are approximately 270,000 military veterans of all ages residing in New York City; and

Whereas, H.R. 3155 would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments; and

Whereas, It is our obligation to ensure the best possible care for the brave men and women who sacrifice so greatly on behalf of our country; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the United States Congress to pass the Caregiver Assistance and Resource Enhancement Act, to provide certain caregivers of veterans with training,

support, and medical services.

JP/AC
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10/15/09